



**Testimony Regarding HB5306**  
**AN ACT CONCERNING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD**  
Karen Rainville, Executive Director  
Connecticut Association for the Education of Young Children  
Education Committee  
February 24, 2016

Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, and distinguished Members of the Education Committee:

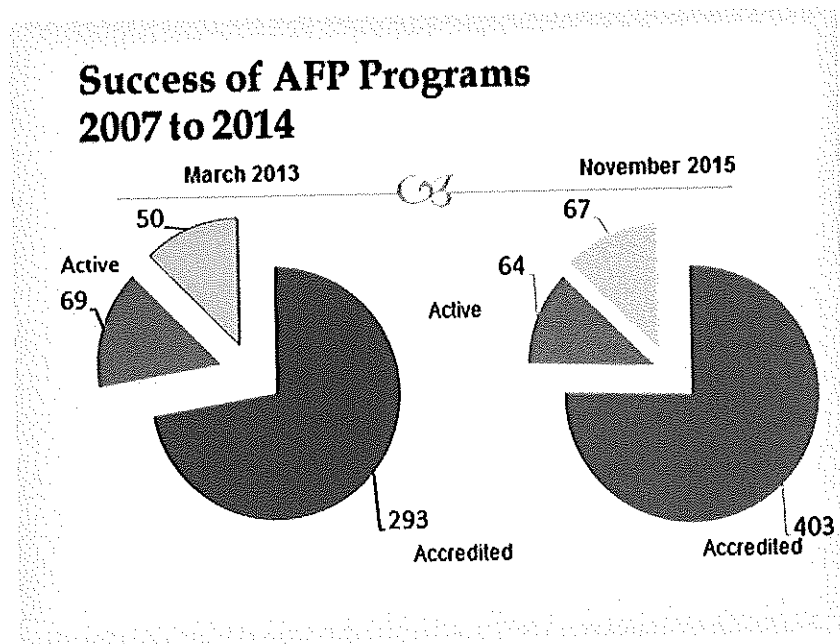
I am testifying today on behalf of the Connecticut Association for the Education of Young Children, the state early childhood professional association. We are the local affiliate of NAEYC, the nation's leading voice on high quality early childhood education.

For the past two decades my agency has held contracts with state agencies to collaborate in the delivery of professional development programs and services to the early childhood community in CT. CAEYC was contracted initially through CT Charts a Course and the Dept. of Social Services, then the Board of Regents and most recently the Office of Early Childhood. The recent decision by the Office of Early Childhood to pull all AFP and professional development contracts in CT from agencies such as CAEYC, Gateway Community College, CREC, Education Connection, LEARN and Eastconn; agencies with proven track records of success and place those funds with a new single vendor has had dramatic negative effects on programs across the state including my agency. Jobs have been lost and services will be interrupted for programs and providers.

Language changes in HB5306, dramatically changes the way services will be implemented for one of the most successful quality improvement programs in this state, the Accreditation Facilitation Program. The AFP funding is currently scheduled to be pulled from existing contractors with a proven track record and placed with a new vendor. Currently directed by Deb Flis of the Office of Early Childhood, this program has helped hundreds of both public and private child care centers reach NAEYC accreditation, the highest indicator of quality for early childhood programs. Connecticut currently has 447 NAEYC accredited programs ranking 3<sup>rd</sup> in the country and 1<sup>st</sup> per capita; a proven track record of success of the current AFP programs. This proposal eliminates the legislative mandates for a regional delivery model of the AFP, eliminates the RFP application process and eliminates the priority into AFP for programs serving low income families. That means in addition to AFP being managed by a brand new vendor, without the expertise of Deb Flis as the Director of the project, this bill would eliminate any legislative mandate to how AFP should be operated. **Why are we changing things that are successful and starting over?** Let's build on the success of the existing model and strive to serve more programs, especially those who serve low income families.

I respectfully request that you keep the existing language in Section 6. Section 17b-749e of the general statute regarding the structure of the Accreditation Facilitation Project going forward.

# Current Accreditation Facilitation Project Data



## AFP Active Caseload

		North Central	East	Northwest	South Central	Southwest
534	Total selected sites	134	79	101	141	79
403	Accredited	109	63	69	109	53
63	Active (candidate, candidacy denied, applicant, enrolled)	16	7	13	19	8
1	Waiting for Decision	0	0	0	0	1
67	Lapsed, deferred, denied, inactive, withdrawn	9	9	19	13	17

\*Chart does not include an additional 38 programs recently selected to AFP